

CHANGING TRENDS: THE EVOLUTION IN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN OF MARYLAND'S REFUGEE POPULATION | 1993-2002

Over the past decade, the national origins of Maryland's incoming refugee and asylee population have changed dramatically. In the early years of resettlement, the vast majority of refugees came from Vietnam and the former Soviet Union. Yet, during the 1990s, as the resettlement program shifted from a Cold War footing towards a more complex humanitarian stance, refugees have come from a growing diversity of countries. In 2003 alone, the Maryland Office for New Americans served refugees and asylees from 49 different countries.

In the accompanying maps, charts and graphs, MONA Intern Colin Kercz has integrated refugee arrival statistics with information on national origins to display how international developments—civil war, ethnic conflict, regime change—have dramatically affected the population of a relatively small state like Maryland.

After the mid-1990s when the Soviet-Vietnamese majority began to disappear, Sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia and the Balkans began to contribute significant shares of Maryland's refugee arrivals. This trend has continued into the new millennium when countries such as Liberia, Cameroon and Bosnia Herzegovina—none of which was among the top ten contributors of refugees in 1993—now contribute to emerging communities in the state.

In examining the data, readers should keep a few things in mind. Two former countries, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, which sent large numbers of refugees to Maryland through the early 1990s no longer exist. While many incoming refugees and asylees still refer to their place of origin by the old designation (e.g., "The Soviet Union" or "Yugoslavia"), others have discarded those names and now refer to the same region by a new designation—"Ukraine," "Russia," "Serbia," "Bosnia," etc.

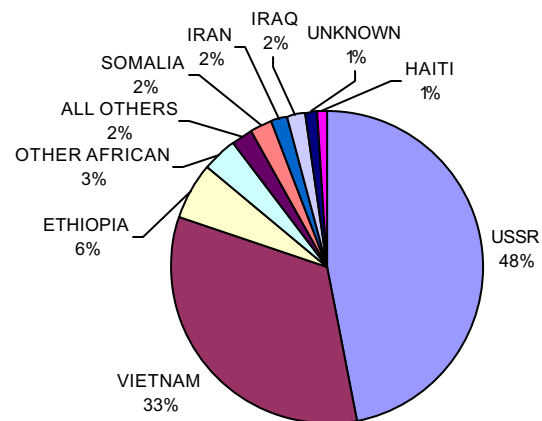
To simplify our presentation, we have standardized names of countries. Thus, self-reported refugee origins in "USSR" have been generalized as "Russia" and self-reported origins in "Yugoslavia" have been generalized as "Serbia." While perhaps not the ideal solution, these designations represent the major political components of the former nation-states and the largest landmasses within the borders of those now extinct entities.

Two other methodological points are worth mention. First, a refugee's country of origin is not always reported to MONA. Second, data from the MONA database represent only refugees who have received assistance through MONA's network of service providers. This may omit a few refugees who entered the state during the period analyzed by the graph. Nevertheless, because refugees and asylees most frequently come with urgent needs for English-language instruction, employment services and the like, we are confident that our statistics depict a "snapshot" of Maryland's refugee population for any given year. Over time, these statistics shed light on a small but significant segment of Maryland's changing population.

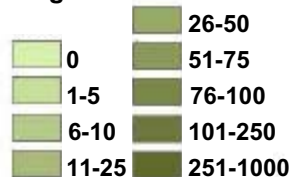
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CHARTS AND FIGURES PAGE 1 | 1993-1994

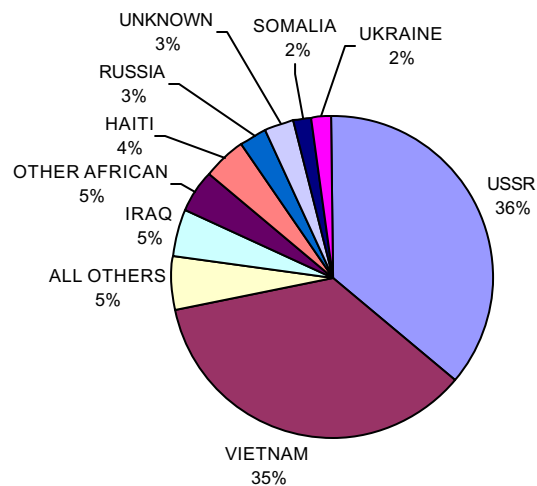
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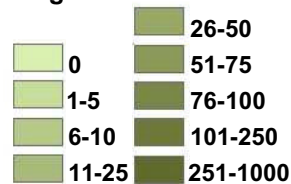
Maryland Refugee Arrivals: Country of Origin 1993



1994



Maryland Refugee Arrivals: Country of Origin 1994

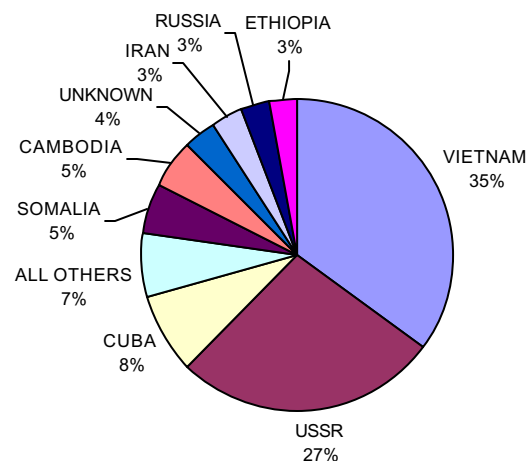


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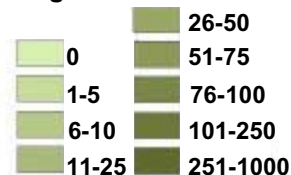
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CHARTS AND FIGURES PAGE 2 | 1995-1996

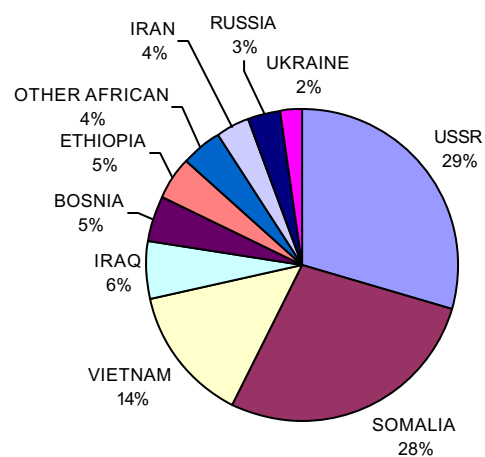
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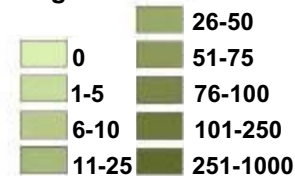
Maryland Refugee Arrivals: Country of Origin 1995



1996



Maryland Refugee Arrivals: Country of Origin 1996

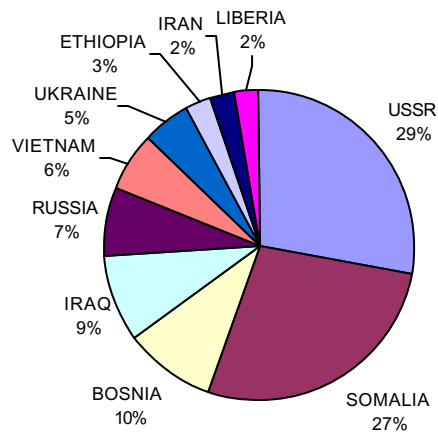


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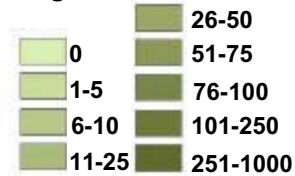
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CHARTS AND FIGURES PAGE 3 | 1997-1998

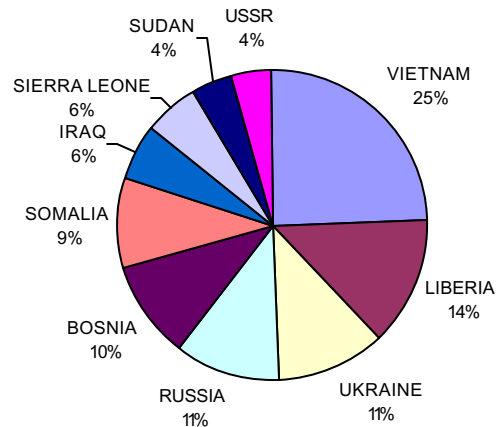
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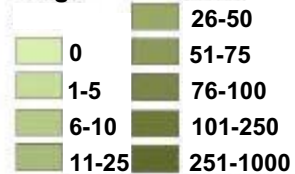
Maryland Refugee Arrivals: Country of Origin 1997



1998



Maryland Refugee Arrivals: Country of Origin 1998

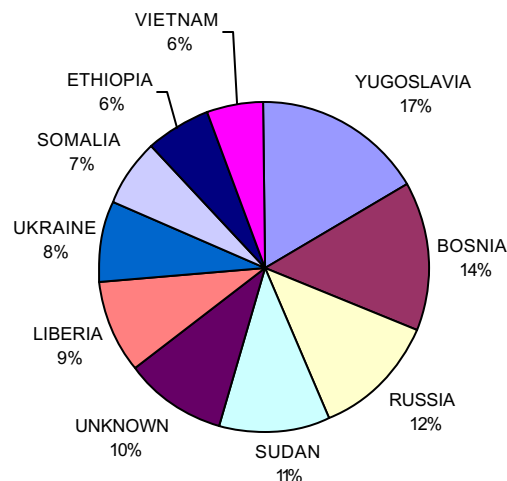


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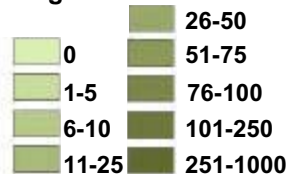
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CHARTS AND FIGURES PAGE 4 | 1999-2000

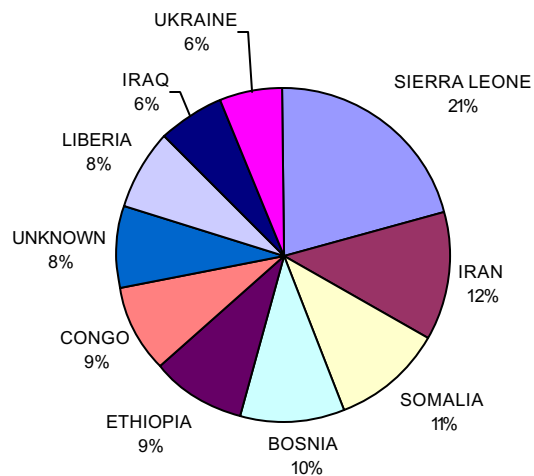
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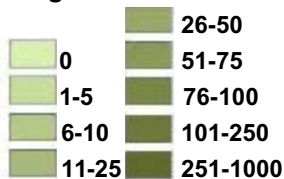
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2000



Maryland Refugee Arrivals: Country of Origin 2000

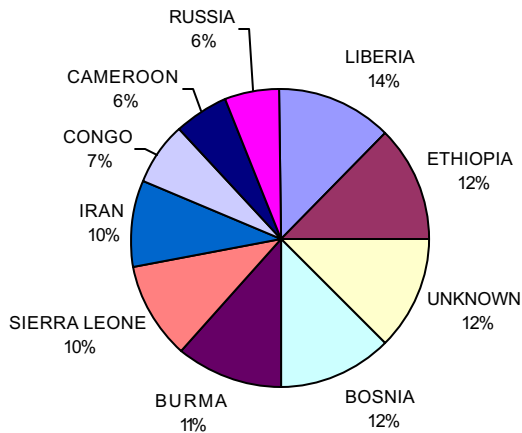


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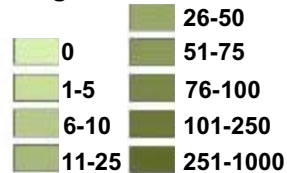
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CHARTS AND FIGURES PAGE 5 | 2001-2002

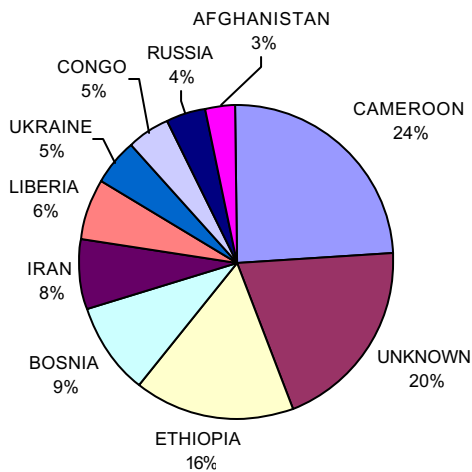
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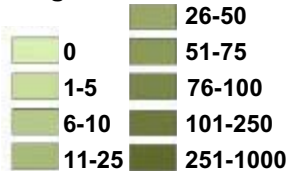
Maryland Refugee Arrivals: Country of Origin 2001



2002



Maryland Refugee Arrivals: Country of Origin 2002



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